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IAC-D-94/1
10 July 1956
IAC-Approved
7 August 1956

INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Survey of NIE Dissemination and Use

References: IAC-D-94 and IAC-M-186, item 4

1. The attached Survey of NIE Dissemination and Use was prepared by the Board of National Estimates pursuant to IAC-D-94.
2. The Board recommended:
 - a. That the IAC note this report.
 - b. That each member of the IAC reexamine its pattern of NIE distribution with the end of continuing to improve the usefulness of NIE's to the policy, planning and executive branches of his agency.
 - c. That each IAC agency undertake to brief new key officials (NIE consumers) within its department on the nature of the NIE and the means at the disposal of these officials for initiating NIE's responsive to specific intelligence problems they may have.
 - d. That the IAC agencies continue to work toward remedying the limitations noted in paragraph 9 of the Conclusions and submit for IAC consideration any proposals they may have for doing so.
3. On 7 August 1956, the IAC noted the Board's report and approved the above recommendations.


WILLIAM P. BUNDY
Secretary

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the preparation of drafts for the NSC Planning Board, which are of the same level of generality as NIE's. NIE's also have considerable value as a reference to the collective judgment of the intelligence community.

F. The Department of Defense^{13/}

22. The Joint Intelligence Group forwards an average of three NIE's to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Principal use is made by the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, where the estimates are read with varying degrees of thoroughness depending on their nature and content.

23. The Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. An average of 12 NIE's are distributed to non-intelligence users in the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The JIG questionnaire indicates that (a) only the conclusions are usually read in the office of the Chairman, JCS, and

¹³ The Survey at the Department of Defense and JCS level was conducted by the Joint Intelligence Group on the basis of written questionnaires.

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in the Joint Strategic Survey Committee; (b) the entire estimate is "sometimes" read in the office of the Joint Logistic Plans Group; and (c) the entire text is "usually" read in the office of NSC Affairs and in the Joint Strategic Plans Group.

24. Answers to the JIG questionnaire indicate that NIE's are read primarily for personal background and information, with only three of the seven offices responding indicating that NIE's were consistently used for working on specific problems. For example, one office which replied that it consistently used NIE's for working on a specific problem also replied that the substance of some NIE's was not adequate for its purposes. The most frequently mentioned limitation on NIE's was that they were too general.

25. In addition to their direct use by end recipients, many NIE's are extensively used by the Joint Intelligence Group in the preparation of the political and economic portions of JIC papers and of various JIG briefings and memoranda.

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G-2 will often rely heavily on NIE's even though the end product does not specifically indicate such reliance.

28. Among others, the following Army officials receive and read with varying degrees of thoroughness the majority of NIE's: Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Research, Assistant Secretary of Civilian-Military Affairs, and Deputy Chief Plans Division of G-3. In most cases, the NIE's are first screened by personal staff subordinates, who will check or side-line appropriate portions. The thoroughness with which an NIE is read by the principals appears to depend upon a number of factors which include: (a) their individual working habits and interests; (b) the timeliness and applicability of a given NIE to problems currently confronting them; (c) their need for joint community judgments; i. e., in preparing for NSC meetings or intelligence conferences or papers with other countries; and (d) the extent to which their attention is flagged by their screeners. Although the survey material is inadequate to permit firm generalizations, as a general rule NIE's have the greatest impact at this level in the Army when they deal with important matters affecting over-all Army plans and policy (the impact of nuclear parity), treat subjects affecting the Army

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which are particularly controversial (the fall of Dien Bien Phu), or affect plans for the disposition of Army resources (Yugoslavia, Baghdad Pact, Korea).

29. NIE's are more extensively used in G-3 than in any other office of the Department of the Army except G-2. It is here that relevant NIE's are often used as an integral part of the process of preparing Army plans. Frequently, estimates in NIE's form the basis for the assumptions upon which Army plans are prepared. The level of generality in an NIE is adequate in some cases for the work done in G-3, and where it isn't supplementary detailed information is obtained from G-2. All G-3 desk officers receive all NIE's which pertain to the problems they are assigned.

30. In summary, the chief uses to which NIE's are put in the Department of the Army seem to be as a reference to the collective judgments of the intelligence community, as a convenient source of personal background information on a variety of subjects affecting Army policy and programs, and as a useful tool for working out specific Army or national foreign policy problems.

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AFOIN, finds that NIE's have not been of as much direct use as desirably they might be in dealing with the responsibilities of the Chief of Staff and the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, in decision making, or establishing a position in dealing with other officials. NIE's have been useful in supplementing other information. The Director, AFOIN, believes that NIE's would be more useful to the Air Force leadership if they more clearly identified things that are causative in certain situations in such terms as to give action people the best chance to decide whether they should prepare against these things, destroy or reduce them, increase them, or take no action. NIE's are also used in connection with Joint Strategic Plans and in preparing special studies to be referred to the Chief of Staff.

I. The Department of the Navy

34. On an average, ONI forwards 10 copies of all NIE's to non-intelligence echelons, including the offices of the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Politico-Military Policy Division, and the Strategic Plans Division. In all these offices, NIE's are screened by qualified staff members before further distribution is made.

35. The Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations make direct use of only a limited number of NIE's. In general, they

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